

Cover picture: Richard Henry Hunter, 1885-1970, painted by Sir James Gunn.

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Ulster Medical Journal 1932 - 1995

This is the first index which the Journal has had. It is dedicated to the memory of Doctor Richard Hunter, the founder of the Journal, its first editor, and a valued contributor in its early days. Doctor Hunter, embryologist, anatomist and teacher, was in his time the inspiration of the pre-clinical students of the Queen's University of Belfast, and of his graduate group in embryology. As was said of Boerhaave, those who knew him could not value him enough, and those who were so unfortunate as not to know him, could never know how much he was to be valued.

The index has taken the four compilers some five years, intermittently as one phase of production succeeded another. What may be called the infrastructure lay in the archives office of the Royal Victoria Hospital. The office had been founded by Doctor RS Allison and carried on by him as archivist and Mrs EO Russell as secretary. A complete set of the Journal had been gathered in the office and it was prepared for binding. An early difficulty, not so minor, was the way the naming and numeration of the issues within a volume varied from time to time. That was sorted out and the binding completed. Then the Journal was read, page by page, from the beginning in 1932 to the selected end 1995, and, the important thing, the index words were selected. That included not only the formal papers but also medical society reports, obituaries, advertisements, and occasional communications from the chief medical officer. In the sixteen years before the Health Service began the problems of panel practice, for instance, were a recurring anxiety to practitioners.

No doubt it would be done better nowadays, but when the index began to form, the index words were entered on cards, and then the cards had to be revised, reviewed, and collated, to delete errors, to ensure that everything of importance was included, to exclude inappropriate duplications, but to preserve useful cross-references. So far as we know only one reference was lost. It was a case of myxoedema in a child, and we are still vexed by this error. It is a pleasure to record that the compilers worked devotedly with each other to produce the best index they were capable of, and the younger members brought the final stages into the era of information technology.

Time is slipping by and the indexing is now a few years in arrears. Someone must take up the task of producing an update annually. The selection of index words is the most important activity. All follows from that.

For the compilers

June 1998

In the Biographical Index references to pictures are in italics and are preceded by a “P.’
References to identical pictures are shown in brackets following the initial reference.

The compilers would be grateful if all errors and omissions were brought to their attention.